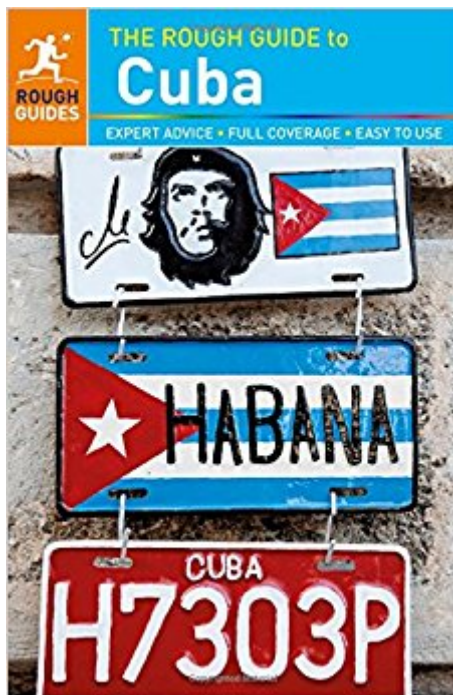


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# The Rough Guide To Cuba



## Synopsis

The Rough Guide to Cuba is the perfect guide for all your travels across this dazzling country. Discover all of Cuba's highlights with insider information ranging from Cuba's diverse music, Scuba diving, and colonial architecture to its world-class ballet and baseball, political history, and captivating capital city, Havana. Clear maps make your travels around this spectacular country easy and unforgettable. You will never miss a sight with the stunning photos included and detailed coverage of Cuba's vibrant cities, glittering beaches, lush countryside, and addictive mixture of the Latin American and Caribbean cultures. Insider tips lead you to the best hotels, bars, clubs, shops, and restaurants in the country. Make the most of your time with The Rough Guide to Cuba.

**Series Overview:** For more than thirty years, adventurous travelers have turned to Rough Guides for up-to-date and intuitive information from expert authors. With opinionated and lively writing, honest reviews, and a strong cultural background, Rough Guides travel books bring more than 200 destinations to life. Visit [RoughGuides.com](http://RoughGuides.com) to learn more.

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## Customer Reviews

The freshest guide on the market. -- Anthony Sattin, Sunday Times, London, UK --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Where to go No trip to Cuba would be complete without a visit to the potent capital city, Havana. A unique and personable mini-metropolis, characterized by a small-town atmosphere, its time-warped

colonial core, Habana Vieja, is crammed with architectural splendours, some laced with Moorish traces and dating as far back as the sixteenth century. Elsewhere in the city there are handsome streets unspoilt by tawdry multinational chain stores and restaurants: with relatively little development since the revolution, the city retains many of its colonial mansions and numerous 1950s hallmarks. The provinces to the immediate east and west of Havana, together with the capital itself, are where tourist attractions are most densely concentrated. Visited frequently by day-trippers from Havana, Pinar del R'io, the centre of nature tourism in Cuba, offers more than enough to sustain a longer stay. The most accessible resorts for walking are Las Terrazas and Soroa, focused around the subtropical, smooth-topped mountain ranges of the Sierra del Rosario and Sierra de los Organos, but it's the peculiar mogote hills of prehistoric Vi ales valley that attract most attention. Beyond, out of sight of the mountains, on a gnarled rod of land pointing out towards Mexico, there's unparalleled seclusion and outstanding scuba diving at Mar'a la Gorda. There are beach resorts the length and breadth of the country but none is more complete than Varadero, the country's long-time premier holiday destination, two hours' drive east from Havana, in Matanzas province. Based on a highway of dazzling white sand, stretching almost the entire length of the 25-kilometre Pen'nsula de Hicacos, this is where most tourists come for the classic package- holiday experience. For the tried-and-tested combination of disco-nightlife, watersports, sunbathing and relaxing in all-inclusive hotels, there is nowhere better in Cuba. On the opposite side of the province, the Pen'nsula de Zapata, with its diversity of wildlife, organized excursions and mixture of hotels, offers a mrange of different possibilities. Across the eastern border from Matanzas into next-door Cienfuegos province, tourist attractions begin to appear less frequently. Travelling east of here, either on the autopista or the island-long Carretera Central, public transport links become weaker and worn-out yet picturesque towns take over from brochure- friendly tourist hot spots. There is, however, a concentration of tourist activity around the historically precious Trinidad, a small colonial city brimming with symbols of Cuba's past, which attracts coach parties and backpackers in equal numbers. If you're intending to spend more than a few days in the centre of the island, this is by far the best base, within short taxi rides of a small but well equipped beach resort, the Pen'nsula de Anc--n, and the Topes de Collantes hiking centre in the Sierra del Escambray. Slightly further afield are a few larger cities: sociable Santa Clara with its convivial main square and thronging crowds of students is the liveliest of the lot, whilst laid-back Cienfuegos, next to the placid waters of a sweeping bay, is sprinkled with colourful architecture, including a splendid nineteenth-century theatre. Further east, the workaday cities of Sancti Sp'ritus and Ciego de vila, both capitals of their namesake provinces, provide excellent stop-offs on a journey along the Carretera Central. Two of

the most popular destinations in this part of the country are off the north coast of Ciego de vila province. With their reams of creamy white beaches and tranquil countryside, the luxurious resorts of Cayo Coco and Cayo Guillermo, on the secluded cays of the same name, are growing month by month. Continuing eastwards into Camagey province, the smaller, rather remote resort of Santa Luc'a is a much promoted though less well equipped option for sun- seekers, while there's an excellent alternative north of here in tiny Cayo Sabinal, with long empty beaches and romantically rustic facilities. Back on the Carretera Central, the romantic and ramshackle city of Camagey, the most populous city in the central part of the island, is a sightseer's delight, with numerous churches and intriguing buildings, as well as a lively nightlife, while the amiable city of Holgu'n is the threshold to a province containing the biggest concentration of pre-Columbian sites in the country. Guardalavaca, on the northern coast of Holgu'n province, is one of the liveliest and most attractive resorts in the country, spread along a long and shady beach with ample opportunities for watersports. While Guantnamo province, forming the far eastern tip of the island, is best known for its infamous US naval base, it is the jaunty seaside town of Baracoa that is the region's most enchanting spot. Isolated from the rest of the country by a high rib of mountains, the quirky town freckled with colonial houses and populated by friendly and hospitable locals is an unrivalled retreat, popular with long-term travellers. With a sparkling coastline fretted with golden-sand beaches such as Chivirico, the undulating emerald mountains of the Sierra Maestra, made for trekking, and Santiago, the country's most vibrant and energetic city after Havana, Santiago de Cuba province, on the island's southeast coast, could make a holiday in itself. Host to the country's most exuberant carnival every July, when a deluge of loud, sweet and passionate sounds surge through the streets, it is testimony to the city's musical heritage that you can hear some of the best Cuban musicians here all year round. Trekkers and revolution enthusiasts will want to follow the Sierra Maestra as it snakes west of here along the south coast into Granma province, offering various revolutionary landmarks and nature trails. Lying off the southwest coast of Havana province, the Isla de la Juventud is often overlooked despite its immense though low-key charms. Easily explored over a weekend, the island promises leisurely walks, some of the best diving in the country and a personable capital town in Nueva Gerona. In the same archipelago is luxurious and anodyne Cayo Largo, the only sizeable beach resort off the southern coastline of Cuba. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

I'm usually a Lonely Planet girl, but their guidebook for Cuba was outdated, so I switched to Rough Guide as it was the most recently published. This may just be the best guidebook I've ever used.

The writing is spot-on, clever, and witty, and provides great frames of reference for understanding the history and culture, as well as alerting you to scams. The maps, especially in Havana, were lifesavers. Keep in mind, though, that this is Cuba. Things aren't always done here "by the book", but this guidebook is an EXCELLENT resource and will give you an idea of how things "should" go.

Perfect companion on my trip to Cuba, especially since accessing the internet in the country can be so difficult. I was able to book a casa particular in Havana through one of the guesthouses listed in the book. Would definitely recommend.

Had an amazing time in Cuba this past February.. The guide has relevant information and it is up to date. For the best of both worlds, if you're traveling with someone else, have them buy the Lonely Planet guide as well. Either are fine, though - you can't go wrong. I also like the subjective writing, as well as the breadth of info. Go for it if you're going to Cuba.

good Cuba guide. Much better than Lonely Planet.

I found things cost a lot more than what the book had said. Budget more than what the guide advises.

very helpfull! good tips

I liked: size, weight, respectful attitude toward Cuban people & history. Had problems with: incomplete & outdated info. Check their website before you go.

Bought this before my trip to Cuba. It was really useful and had good up to date information

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